

Famed Polar Explorer Proving Fortitude in New Role

Fortitude is ingrained in the hardy explorers who venture into the vast mysteries of the coldest and most remote regions of the world, but one of the greatest of those living — a man bestowed with about every honor that might be conferred upon him — is calling upon it as never in his life.

When Dr. Paul A. Siple was sworn into office Jan. 25 as scientific adviser to the Director of Army Research, the very fact of his being there was more than a small miracle. It was living proof of the power of faith, in himself and in those who have stood steadfast in real trouble.

To some who experience the catastrophe of a partially incapacitating stroke, the prospect of many months of discouragingly slow recovery stifles the will to survive. Others say from their heart, "I'm lucky to be alive!" and resolutely turn to the task of fighting their way back.

Dr. Siple has come a long way on the road back to the goal of complete recovery he has set for himself. His faith in his ability to achieve that objective is supported by "will" power. It shows in his unflinching good humor, the ready wit for which he is renowned, the quick smile flashed to friends and associates. His speech is lucid, his mind still able to call rapidly upon the vast store of knowledge that has added to his fame.

Now he can be humorous in describing what happened to him on June 6, 1966. "I felt a bit tired after a somewhat strenuous series of conferences and I had another meeting scheduled, so I was sitting in my hotel room in Wellington, New Zealand, going over some papers. Suddenly I felt as if I wanted to sit down on the floor. And when I did, I just couldn't move."

Mrs. Siple, in whose honor an antarctic peak is named Mount Ruth Siple, was some 4,200 miles away at that time. She and daughter Mary were on vacation at Alice Springs in the middle of Australia, known as the driest part of that vast continent ("but it rained all the time we were there").

How they managed to be at Dr. Siple's bedside 30 hours later is a story in itself, reflecting great credit upon the American Embassy staff in Canberra and a sympathetically understanding, very efficient British Overseas Airways Corp. executive.

More than a month later, after responding encouragingly to physical therapy by specialists in Wellington, Dr. Siple was returned to Canberra. Since taking leave of absence from his position as scientific adviser to the Director of Army Research in June 1963, he had been assigned there with the Department of State as scientific attache for Australia and New Zealand.

Continued progress led doctors to de-

cide that Dr. Siple could be returned to the U.S. and he and Mrs. Siple arrived in Los Angeles, Calif., Sept. 16. Then Ruth learned that her 79-year-old mother, whom she had looked forward eagerly to seeing again, had died the day before.

Under expert medical care in Washington, including daily treatment by a physical therapist who had accompanied him from Australia, Dr. Siple made further recovery. He began walking on his good right leg aided by a 4-legged crutch.

That started him to thinking about "getting back in the harness again." In this determination, he was encouraged by many friends of long standing familiar with the "power of mind over matter" as applied to the famed explorer.

Then came another setback, just when Paul and Ruth were looking forward to a visit from his 90-year-old mother and other relatives during the Christmas holidays. He came down with a severe cold and arthritis settled in his right leg.

The hollow of the sling of his disabled left arm was a convenient place to store a supply of Kleenex — until one was ignited by a spark from his cigaret lighter. He smothered the flame with his right hand, but not until his left sustained third degree burns.

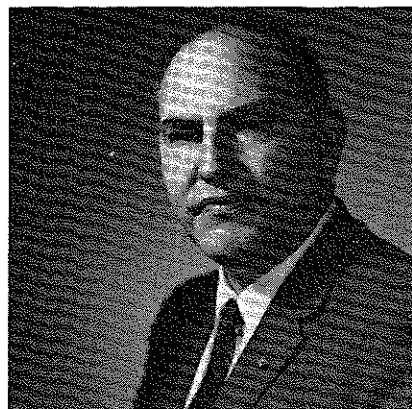
Another misfortune followed. While going to the mail box to post a letter, Dr. Siple's mother slipped on ice and broke her left ankle in two places shortly before she and Paul's sister and brother-in-law were to leave by car for the trip to Washington from Canton, Ohio. But neither that injury, bad varicose veins, nor a heart condition discouraged her from making the long-awaited trip.

"You should have seen her hopping around with her foot in a cast during the holidays," Dr. Siple chuckled. "She was the life of the party. We kidded a bit about making one really mobile person out of the both of us, but decided it was not feasible since both of us had bad left legs."

That quip is characteristic of Dr. Siple's present approach to his problems of regaining the vigor of physique for which he was noted. Never will you hear a faint hint of feeling sorry for himself, of bemoaning the fickleness of fate. Instead his attitude is: "I'm really mighty lucky!"

To his duties as scientific adviser to the Director of Army Research, Dr. Siple expects to be able to give the full value of his lifetime of experience as a scientist and explorer, and the keenness of intellect that characterizes his approach to problems. Physically, the way back still may hold a few bad curves, but he has a lifetime of training in coping with the rigors of the unknown.

Dr. Siple's sphere of service as an adviser will extend beyond research activities to development, testing and opera-



Dr. Paul A. Siple

tional functions, and beyond Army activities and programs in these areas into Defense-wide and Air Force and Navy programs of interest to the Army.

He also will be concerned with problems of establishing and maintaining more effective interfaces between the Army, industry and academic institutions — particularly as pertaining to substantially improved "coupling" of research and development, so as to achieve maximum benefit from new discoveries in their application to engineering design problems.

The job presents a real challenge to a man whose career reflects an ever-eager, highly successful response to challenge, starting as a 18-year-old Boy Scout selected in a nationwide contest for the honor of accompanying Admiral Richard E. Byrd on his first Antarctic Expedition (1928-30).

Redstone Laboratory Studies Miniaturized Servo Actuator

Prototypes of one of the smallest electromechanical fin servo actuators developed for guided missile application are being evaluated by the Inertial Guidance and Control Laboratory at Redstone Arsenal, Ala. The unit fits in a 6-inch diameter envelope.

Because of the high level of flight trajectory accuracy and instant response time, the new unit is said to offer new horizons for the smaller family of missiles.

The miniature servo actuator was developed for the Army Missile Command under contract by the Cleveland-based Power Equipment Division of Lear Siegler, Inc.

Watervliet May Be Historic Site

Watervliet (N.Y.) Arsenal has been recommended by the Department of the Interior for designation as a national historic site. The 153-year-old U.S. Army weapons design and development center was recommended for its role in arms production and procurement during seven wars, and also for contributions to the Nation's commerce and industry.